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Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 ACDE-00 ERDA-05 CIAE-00 H-01

INR-07 IO-10 L-02 NSAE-00 OIC-02 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-03

PRS-01 SAJ-01 SAM-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 TRSE-00

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P R 031425Z MAR 75
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0870
SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
INFO USMISSION NATO
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
USNMR SHAPE
USCINCEUR

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 MBFR VIENNA 0078

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PARM, NATO
SUBJECT: MBFR: DISCUSSION WITH POLISH REP FEBRUARY 28, 1975

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: RECENT INDICATIONS, INCLUDING THE EASTERN PROPOSALS TO STAGGER THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SECOND STAGE OF THEIR NOVEMBER 1973 DRAFT AGREEMENT TO PROVIDE FOR US-SOVIET IMPLEMENTATION FIRST (DETAILS IN MBFR VIENNA 0068) AND THE COMMENTARY ON THAT PROPOSAL GIVEN US BY THE POLISH REPRESENTATIVE (DETAILS BELOW), INDICATE THAT THE EAST WILL FOR THE TIME BEING PERSIST WITH ITS EFFORT TO OBTAIN AGREEMENT ON A FIRST REDUCTION AGREEMENT LIMITED IN SCOPE IN SOME FORM. ALTHOUGH THE EVIDENCE FOR SUCH A CONCLUSION IS STILL FRAGMENTARY, IN THE COURSE OF DEVELOPING ITS POSITION IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THIS OBJECTIVE, THE EAST MAY BE MOVING TOWARDS A FIRST REDUCTION STEP WHICH WOULD COMBINE US-SOVIET REDUCTIONS ON AN EQUAL PERCENTAGE BASIS WITH REDUC-
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TIONS BY REMAINING DIRECT PARTICIPANTS ON AN EQUAL

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NUMBER BASIS. END SUMMARY.

2. IN THE COURSE OF INFORMAL DISCUSSION BETWEEN POLISH REP STRULAK AND US DEPREP ON FEBRUARY 28, STRULAK SAID HE WAS INTERESTED BY THE RECENT EMPHASIS BY WESTERN REPRESENTATIVES ON THE NEED FOR COMPENSATION BY THE EAST FOR GEORGRAPHIC AND OTHER DISPARITIES IN THE SITUATION IN CENTRAL EUROPE. AS HE ANALYZED THE WESTERN POSITION, THE WEST HAD TWO MAIN REQUIREMENTS; ASYMMETRY OF REDUCTIONS AND PHASING. AS HE WOULD ESTIMATE IT, ASYMMETRY WAS THE MOST IMPORTANT OF THESE TWO BECAUSE, EVEN IF ONE ABIDED BY THE WESTERN TWO-PHASE SYSTEM, AFTER IT WAS OVER WHAT WOULD BE IMPORTANT WOULD BE THE AMOUNT OF REDUCTIONS TAKEN BY BOTH SIDES AND THE LIMITATIONS IMPOSED ON THE FORCES OF EACH SIDE. IF ONE WAS SPEAKING OF COMPENSATION, THEN IT WOULD BE LOGICAL FOR THE WEST TO BE PREPARED TO GIVE IN ON ONE OF THESE TWO AREAS IN ORDER TO GET SOMETHING IN THE OTHER. AFTER ALL, ONE COULD NOT EXPECT BOTH THE COMMON CEILING AND PHASING. THAT WOULD BE TOO MUCH.

3. US DEPREP PRESENTED REASONS WHY IT WAS REASONABLE FOR THE WEST TO EXPECT EASTERN MOVEMENT ON BOTH OF THESE POINTS. STRULAK REPLIED THAT FOR THEIR PART, THE POLES FROM ONE VIEWPOINT CONSIDERED THE NEGOTIATIONS AS A MEANS OF ASSURING A CONTINUING UNITED STATES ROLE IN EUROPEAN SECURITY ISSUES. BUT FROM THE POLISH VIEWPOINT GERMAN REDUCTIONS WERE THE FIRST PRIORITY. IF THE WEST EXPECTED TO RECEIVE ASYMMETRY IN REEDUCTIONS, IT WOULD HAVE TO GIVE ON THIS ISSUE. MOREOVER, THE IDEA OF COLLECTIVE CEILINGS WAS IMPRACTICAL. US DEPREP POINTED OUT THAT, VIEWING THE ISSUE AS A MATTER OF PRACTICAL POLITICS, THE NATIONAL CEILINGS ISSUE WAS HIGHLY IMPORTANT TO THE FEDERAL GERMANS, THE LATTER WERE A MAJOR ALLY OF THE UNITED STATES, AND HE COULD SEE NO VALUES IN THE CURRENT NEGOTIATIONS WHICH WOULD MAKE THE UNITED STATES WISH TO JEOPARDIZE THAT RELATIONSHIP. HENCE, BOTH FOR GOOD OBJECTIVE MREASONS AND FOR IMPORTANT POLITICAL REAONS, THE WEST WOULD CONTINUE TO RESIST NATIONAL CEILINGS. US DEPREP GAVE A BRIEF RESUME OF POST-WAR DEVELOPMENTS IN GERMANY AND THE REASONS WHY ALLEGED GERMAN THREAT SHOULD

NOT BE EXAGGERATED.

4. POLISH REP SAID US DEPREP'S ANALYSIS OF THE CURRENT SITUATION IN THE FRG COINCIDED CLOSELY WITH ANALYSIS HE HAD HEARD FROM THOSE POLISH OFFICIALS CHARGED WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH THE FRG. ON THE OTHER HAND, PRESENT POLITICAL CONDITIONS IN THE FRG WERE NO GUARANTEE FOR THE FUTURE, ESPECIALLY IN

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CONDITIONS OF ECONOMIC DIFFICULTY. THIS WAS WHY THE EAST
WAS INTENT ON GERMAN REDUCTIONS AND AN EFFECTIVE CEILING
ON THE GERMANS. POLISH REP THEN DREW ATTENTION TO THE
EXISTANCE OF THE WEU LIMITATIONS ON GERMAN FORCES. HE
SUGGESTED THAT IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO CONSIDER A
SYSTEM OF INFORMING THE EAST IF THIS TOP LIMIT ON
GERMAN MANPOWER WERE RAISED OR CHANGED. ALTHOUGH POLISH REP
WAS BY IMPLICATION SUGGESTING THAT THE EAST BECOME A
PARTY TO THE WEU LIMITATIONS, HE DID NOT REPEAT NOT SUGGEST
THAT THEY BE MAINTAINED AT THEIR PRESENT MAXIMUM LEVEL,
BUT RATHER THAT THEY COULD BE INCREASED UNILATERALLY
BY WEST AS LONG AS THE EAST WERE NOTIFIED. US DEPREP
REPEATED REASONS FOR WESTERN OPPOSITION TO NATIONAL CEILINGS.

5. US DEPREP ASKED POLISH REP FOR HIS INTERPREATION OF
THE RECENT EASTERN PROPOSAL TO STAGGER THE IMPLEMENTATION
OF THE SECOND STAGE OF THE EASTERN DRAFT AGREEMENT TO
PERMIT THE US AND SOVIETS TO REDUCE TOGETHER FIRST,
FOLLOWED BY THE REMAINING DIRECT PARTICIPANTS. POLISH REP
INDICATED THAT THE INTRINSIC SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS MOVE WAS
NOT GREAT, BUT THAT THE EAST HAD INTENDED IT TO BE A "BARGAIN-
ING SIGNAL" TO BRING THE VIENNA DISCUSSIONS INTO A PHASE OF
MORE ACTIVE NEGOTIATION. AT THE END OF THE CONVERSATION,
ALMOST AS AN AFTER-THOUGH, POLISH REP EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT THE
WEST WOULD REVISE ITS POSITION AND INCLUDE ARAMENTS AND NUCLEAR
WEAPONS IN REDUCTIONS. THIS WAS HIS SOLE MENTION OF
THIS SUBJECT.

6. COMMENT: TAKEN TOGETHER WITH OTHER INDICATORS,
STRULAK'S REMARKS PROVIDE SOME EVIDENCE, AS YET FRAG-
MENTARY, OF A POSSIBLE EMERGING TREND IN EASTERN TACTICS.
ONE RECENT PIECE OF EVIDENCE CAME IN A CONVERSATION
WITH FRG REP ON FEBRUARY 27, WITH SOVIET
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FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL VIKTOR LENVONOVICH ISRAELYAN,
CHIEF OF THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS DEPARTMENT AND
A MEMBER OF THE COLLEGIUM OF THE MINISTRY, THEN ON A SHORT
VISIT TO VIENNA, MAKE A CASE FOR AN INITIAL REDUCTION STEP
OF POLITICAL NATURE, DELIVERATELY LIMITED AS TO
ITS MILITARY SCOPE IN ORDER TO AVOID CONTROVERSY WITH
MILITARY LEADERS ON BOTH SIDES (DETAILS IN SEPAIR).

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P R 031425Z MAR 75
FM USDEL MBFR VIENNA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0871
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INFO USMISSION NATO
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
USNMR SHAPE
USCINCEUR

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7. MOST EASTERN MOVES SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS HAVE BEEN AIMED AT MAXIMUM LIMITATIONS ON THE WEST ACCOMPANIED BY NUMERICALLY SMALL INITIAL REDUCTIONS. THE LATEST EASTERN PROPOSAL OF FEBRUARY 25, TO DIVIDE THE SECOND STAGE OF ITS NOVEMBER 8, 1973 DRAFT AGREEMENT INTO TWO SEPARATE PHASES OF IMPLEMENTATION, WITH US AND SOVIETS EACH REDUCING 5 PERCENT OF THEIR FORCES IN THE FIRST SIX MONTHS OF 1976 AND THE REMAINING DIRECT PARTICIPANTS ALSO REDUCING THEIR FORCES BY 5 PERCENT IN THE REMAINING SIX MONTHS OF 1976, CONTINUES THIS TREND. THIS PROPOSAL MAY BE INTENDED ONLY AS A SUPERFICIAL DEMONSTRATION OF FLEXIBILITY. BUT IF IT HAS ANY SERIOUS PURPOSE, IT IS TO BRING TO THE FORE THE POSSIBILITY OF AN INITIAL STEP LIMITED IN NUMERICAL SCOPE OF WHICH US AND SOVIET REDUCTIONS MIGHT FORM THE BULK, AND IN WHICH, US-SOVIET REDUCTIONS MIGHT BE COMPUTED ON THE BASIS OF AN EQUAL PERCENTAGE OF THESE TWO FORCES. THE EAST WOULD IN ALL
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PROBABILITY CONTINUE TO INSIST THAT ALL REMAINING

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DIRECT PARTICIPANTS REDUCE IN A FIRST STEP. BUT IT MIGHT INDICATE THAT THE TOTAL SIZE OF THESE REDUCTIONS COULD BE SMALLER AND COULD BE COMPUTED ON THE BASIS OF AN EQUAL TOTAL FOR EACH SIDE. THIS APPROACH WOULD COMBINE THE TWO REDUCTION METHERODS PROPOSED BY THE EAST IN ONE INITIAL STEP DESIGNED TO BE MORE ATTRACTIVE TO THE WEST. WHEN KHLESTOV ADVANCED HIS SYMBOLIC REDUCTION PROPOSAL POSITION IN MARCH 1974, HE INDICATED THAT INITIAL REDUCTIONS COULD BE COMPUTED EITHER BY EQUAL NUMBERS OR A SMALL EQUAL PERCENTAGE. THERE IS AS YET INSUFFICIENT EVIDENCE TO JUSTIFY A FIRM CONCLUSION, BUT THE EAST MAY BE EDGING TOWARDS AN INITIAL REDUCTION AGREEMENT WHICH MIGHT HAVE THE FOLLOWING ATTRIBUTES:

A. EQUAL 5 PERCENT REDUCTIONS OF US AND SOVIET FORCES;

B. REDUCTION OF A SMALL EQUAL NUMBER OF FORCES BY ALL DIRECT PARTICIPANTS ON EACH SIDE;

C. POSSIBLY A COLLECTIVE CEILING FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS INITIAL AGREEMENT ONLY;

D. POSTPONEMENT OF REDUCTION OF ARMAMENTS TO SUBSEQUENT NEGOTIATIONS, PERHAPS IN CONJUNCTION WITH A COMMITMENT TO REDUCE AIRCRAFT AND NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN THESE FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS.

8. AT THE MOMENT, AN APPROACH OF THIS TYPE IS ONLY A THEORETICAL POSSIBILITY. WE WILL BE OBSERVING THE FURTHER COURSE OF EASTERN PRESENTATIONS TO SEE WHETHER IT IS DEVELOPED FURTHER. END COMMENT.DEAN

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